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U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

UGANDA – Complex Emergency

Situation Report #2, Fiscal Year (FY) 2005

April 13, 2005

Note: The last situation report was dated January 5, 2005

BACKGROUND

Since 1986, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), led by Joseph Kony, has waged an insurgency in northern Uganda, using camps in southern Sudan as a base for attacks on civilians and government forces. According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), LRA attacks have displaced nearly 95 percent of the ethnic Acholi population in Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, and Lira districts. LRA tactics against civilians include murder, looting, burning houses, torture, mutilation, and abduction of children for the purposes of forced conscription, labor, and sexual servitude. In March 2002, improved relations between the Governments of Uganda (GOU) and Sudan (GOS), led the GOU to launch 'Operation Iron Fist,' sending Uganda Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) to disable LRA camps in southern Sudan. However, the humanitarian situation in northern Uganda deteriorated as LRA forces expanded attacks from the northern Acholi sub-region to the eastern Langi and Teso sub-regions, assaulting villages and camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs). Escalating civil conflict and violence, combined with looting and cattle raids by Karamojong pastoralists in eastern Uganda, have resulted in a humanitarian crisis spanning 19 years.

According to the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), more than 1.4 million Ugandans, 80 percent of whom are women and children, have been displaced and live in camps without adequate food, protection, water, sanitation facilities, and health care. The conflict threatens food security, even in normally productive agricultural areas. Continued insecurity also hinders the ability of relief workers to provide humanitarian assistance and deliver relief supplies. As the scale of the conflict has widened, LRA child abductions have increased. UNICEF estimates that the LRA abducted approximately 12,000 children since June 2002, in addition to the estimated 18,000 abducted between 1986 and 2002. An estimated 30,000 northern Ugandans, primarily children, have become night commuters, traveling each evening from vulnerable rural communities to spend the night in the perceived safety of urban centers.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
IDPs	1,363,990 ¹	OCHA, February 2005
Refugees in Uganda	215,000	State/PRM ² , April 2005
Night Commuters	30,000	UNICEF, March 2005
Total Abducted Children	30,000 ³	UNICEF, March 2005
Ugandan Refugees	26,800	UNHCR, December 2004

¹ The figure reflects the numbers of World Food Program (WFP) beneficiaries, and not necessarily the total number of internally displaced persons.

² U.S. Department of State/Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

³ The figure represents the estimated number of children abducted between 1986 and 2005. An unknown number of abducted children have escaped or have been captured by UPDF forces during the conflict.

Total FY 2005 USAID/OFDA Assistance to Uganda \$1,671,469
Total FY 2005 USG Humanitarian Assistance to Uganda.....\$42,255,269

CURRENT SITUATION

Peace process in flux. Following unsuccessful attempts to negotiate a general ceasefire agreement in December 2004, the GOU ordered the UPDF to resume operations against the LRA in northern Uganda and southern Sudan. Clashes between the two parties occurred frequently during the following weeks. In an effort to reinvigorate the peace process, the GOU announced a unilateral ceasefire on February 3 and a halt all UPDF operations against the LRA for a period of 18 days. On February 22, the limited ceasefire expired and hostilities soon resumed.

Since Operation Iron Fist began in 2002, the UPDF has become increasingly effective in killing and capturing a number of high-level LRA commanders. In addition, numerous LRA officials have defected in recent months,

including the chief spokesman for the LRA in the most recent peace negotiations, Brigadier Sam Kolo.

LRA attacks increase. Despite the February 3 ceasefire, LRA attacks against civilians increased in frequency and intensity in February and continued throughout March. OCHA received reports that LRA attack groups also increased in size, from 4 to 8 soldiers previously to larger groups of 10 to 50 in Gulu and Kitgum. According to UNICEF, violent attacks in March included the murder of an unspecified number of civilians in Gulu and Adjumani districts; the ambush and brutal mutilation of at least seven women in Kitgum District; and the abduction of dozens of civilians in all northern districts.

Humanitarian access requires escort. On February 25, UNICEF reported that only 20 percent of the 210 IDP camps in the conflict-affected districts were accessible on a regular basis without armed escorts. According to OCHA, unidentified gunmen ambushed a Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) vehicle between Omeo and Aburu camps in Gulu District in February, intimidating the occupants and stealing humanitarian provisions and equipment. MSF and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are constrained by their mandates from hiring military escorts. In hopes of improving regular access, UNICEF recently deployed two armor-plated vehicles to its Zonal Offices in Gulu and Kitgum for use by UNICEF and partner organizations.

According to OCHA, access to beneficiaries in Lira District improved in February, and IDPs have begun returning to rural areas, now that the delivery of supplies and services is more regular. Increased access allowed USAID/OFDA partner Action Against Hunger/USA (AAH/USA) to initiate vital food security activities in all six camps in Otuoke County.

IDP situation in northern Uganda remains poor. UNICEF estimates that more than 1.4 million people are internally displaced in northern Uganda, 80 percent of whom are women and children. The majority of IDPs reside in camps in Gulu, Kitgum, Pader, and Lira districts. The IDP camps remain largely underserved and lack basic services for the residents. Following a recent trip to northern Uganda, USAID/OFDA staff reported that access to water and sanitation facilities is among the most critical emergency needs in the IDP camps. Moreover, food security in the camps remains tenuous. OCHA estimates that more than 75 percent of the population in the north is dependent on WFP for food assistance.

Number of night commuters fluctuates. UNICEF estimates that 30,000 children abandon their homes in rural areas each evening to sleep in the relative safety of urban centers, primarily Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader districts. After decreasing slightly in previous months, OCHA reports that the number of night commuters in Gulu rose in February to approximately 13,000 from 10,000 in January. The increase coincided with the end of the ceasefire and subsequent intensified LRA attacks in the area. However, according to OCHA, as attacks decreased around Kitgum town in February, the number of night commuters fell to 12,515 from 15,419 in January.

Insecurity limits access to farm land. Security inside IDP camps has improved since the GOU acknowledged responsibility for the security of all IDPs in September 2004 and increased UPDF troop presence around the camps. However, IDPs departing the established security perimeter around the camps are vulnerable to violent LRA ambushes, severely limiting the ability to access land for planting prior to the rainy season, which begins

in April. Relief agencies have requested that the GOU expand the perimeter in order to allow IDPs access to farm lands during the agricultural season.

Food insecurity in Karamoja. Drought conditions have worsened food security in the Karamoja sub-region. According to USAID's Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), more than half of the households in Karamoja have very low or no food stocks. Livestock owners sell the animals at lower than normal price for income to purchase grains. In March, WFP began distributing targeted food assistance to approximately 117,000 people. The number of beneficiaries is expected to increase to 570,000 in April, and will remain at this level until the harvest in July and August. FEWS NET reports that the increase is likely to stress WFP's already tenuous food aid pipeline, which faces an estimated deficit of 80,000 metric tons (MT) between February and September.

Less than normal rain levels expected. The Uganda Department of Meteorology forecasted a high probability for most of the country to receive only average to below normal rainfall between March and May. The northern districts are expected to be among the most affected by low rainfall, which may detrimentally affect crop and livestock production. Moreover, an extended dry spell from May to August 2004 and poor second season harvests has already exacerbated the current food insecurity.

Fires damage crowded camps. According to OCHA, several fires broke out in the Aromo, Ageng, Aler, Ogur, Aloji, Bar, Padibe, Otuboi, and Anyara IDP camps in the Lira, Kitgum, and Teso districts between January and February 2005. OCHA conducted several camp fire assessments in February, reporting significant household property damage. Overcrowding in the camps, as well as hot and windy conditions, allowed the fires to spread quickly and destroy many structures in the camps. In response, UNICEF and relief agencies distributed blankets, tarpaulins, cooking utensils, and other emergency relief supplies to affected camp residents. In order to reduce the incidences of fire, OCHA is considering the recruitment of fire volunteers in all camps, in addition to general fire prevention sensitization campaigns.

Dokolo and Abenyo camps vacant. In February, OCHA reported the apparent abandonment of the Dokolo and Abenyo IDP camps in Lira District. While the camps are not officially closed, approximately 20,000 IDPs returned home between December 2004 and January 2005. In response, WFP announced plans to phase out the IDPs from monthly general food ration in March and to distribute a resettlement package of a three-month food ration instead.

Cholera in Jengali camp. On April 11, the U.N. World Health Organization announced that 2 people have died and an additional 25 people have contracted cholera in the Jengali IDP camp in Gulu District. Following an

assessment of all water sources in the camp that found no contamination, WHO concluded that a number of residents may have carried the cholera strains from the Pabbo camp after an epidemic occurred there last October. Treatment for affected residents, as well as a personal and community hygiene campaign, are currently under way.

Refugee flows. According to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Uganda currently hosts more than 230,000 refugees from neighboring countries. During 2004, an estimated 10,000 new Sudanese refugees arrived in northwestern Uganda's Moyo, Yumbe, and Adjumani districts. The success of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan could be a determining factor for the voluntary repatriation of Sudanese refugees. According to OCHA, UNHCR does not plan to assist in the repatriation of Sudanese refugees until the second half of 2005.

The conflict in neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo continues to cause refugee flows into southern Uganda. According to UNHCR, increased fighting in the DRC resulted in more than 20,000 refugees entering Uganda since the beginning of 2005. Approximately half of the refugees arrived in Ishasha in mid-January, but roughly 8,000 returned to the DRC within days. According to State/PRM, close to 200 Somalis arrived in Uganda between January and March, and approximately 1,000 Rwandans entered in March.

GOU releases 2002 census data. In March, the GOU released the results of the 2002 countrywide census - the first since 1991. According to the census, the population grew to 24.7 million from 16.7 million in the 11-year period, indicating an annual growth rate of 3.3 percent. The GOU reported that higher birthrates and lower infant mortality are likely to cause Uganda's population to more

than double, to 54 million, by 2025. At the time of the census, more than 56 percent of Uganda's population was under 18 years of age.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

On November 3, 2004, U.S. Ambassador Jimmy J. Kolker redeclared a disaster in response to the ongoing complex humanitarian emergency in northern Uganda.

In FY 2005 to date, USAID/OFDA has provided nearly \$1.7 million through five implementing partners for relief assistance. USAID/OFDA allocated more than \$1 million to AAH/USA and International Medical Corps for health and nutrition programs; \$425,000 to Medair to improve sanitation conditions and access to potable water; and more than \$100,000 to UNICEF for water and sanitation programs, as well as health and nutrition coordination activities. In addition, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$100,000 to OCHA to enhance coordination efforts among the humanitarian community.

In FY 2005, USAID/FFP has provided 63,700 MT of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance valued at more than \$40 million. Distributed through WFP, USAID/FFP assistance consists primarily of maize, corn-soya blend, vegetable oil, and pulses. USAID/FFP contributions target IDPs in northern and eastern districts, as well as drought-affected families in the Karamoja sub-region.

In FY 2005, the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) continued to support the humanitarian needs of refugees in Uganda. State/PRM has provided \$300,000 to WFP for refugee feeding programs, and \$250,000 to International Rescue Committee (IRC) to support HIV/AIDS programs. This is in addition to approximately \$48.5 million provided to UNHCR, a portion of which supports programs in Uganda.

U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA IN FY 2005

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
AAH/USA	Nutrition	Pader, Gulu, Lira	\$722,073
IMC	Health, Nutrition	Pader, Kitgum	\$299,396
MEDAIR	Water and Sanitation	Pader	\$425,000
UNICEF	Nutrition, Water and Sanitation	Countrywide	\$112,500
OCHA	Coordination	Countrywide	\$112,500
TOTAL USAID/OFDA			\$1,671,469
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE			
WFP	63,700 MT in PL 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$40,033,800 ²
TOTAL USAID/FFP			\$40,033,800
STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE			
IRC	Refugee HIV/AIDS	Countrywide	\$250,000
WFP	Refugee feeding	Countrywide	\$300,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM.....			\$550,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA IN FY 2005			\$41,705,269
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA IN FY 2005			\$42,255,269

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents committed and/or obligated amounts as of April 12, 2005.

² Estimated value of food assistance.



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